

Summary/Final Minutes – Work Session – March 15, 2016

Savannah City Government SUMMARY/FINAL MINUTES COUNCIL WORK SESSION & CITY MANAGER'S BRIEFING March 15, 2016 – 11:00 a.m.

PRESENT: Mayor Eddie W. DeLoach, Presiding
Mayor Pro-Tem Carol Bell
Alderman Julian Miller, Chairman of Council
Alderman Brian Foster, Vice-Chairman of Council
Van Johnson, II, (arrived at 11:45 a.m.), Tony Thomas
John Hall, Estella Shabazz (arrived at 11:25 a.m.), Bill Durrence

City Manager Stephanie Cutter
City Attorney W. Brooks Stillwell
Assistant City Attorney William Shearouse

Mayor DeLoach called the meeting to order.

Upon motion of Alderman Miller, seconded by Alderman Hall, and unanimously carried the agenda was amended to add Litigation.

Disparity Study

Rodney Strong, CEO at Griffin & Strong and Dr. Gregory Price, Senior Economist at Morehouse College presented a PowerPoint Presentation (**Presentation on file in the Office of the Clerk of Council**)

The following questions and comments were made during and after the presentation

Alderman Miller asked Mr. Strong how relevant market is defined. Mr. Strong replied you look at an area where approximately 75% or more of the goods are purchased based on where they are located.

Alderman Durrence asked how do you determine where the line is for over or underutilization. Mr. Strong replied first you must determine availability, all firms that submitted a bid are looked at to determine if they are in fact, eligible to do business upon completion, an availability estimate is completed after that point.

Alderman Thomas asked how long the study period was. Mr. Strong replied five years. Programs cannot go on in perpetuity, you have to be able to look to see if progress has been made, whether the current efforts are successful and it has to be benchmarked at some type of reasonable interval.

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Alderman Thomas then asked if there has been a comparison of disparity studies from the past and when were the public hearings held. Mr. Strong stated it should have been called a public meeting, notices were sent out to the public and they were allowed to come give testimonies to the distinctions. He continued stating anecdotal interviews are held where individuals are not asked to reveal their information unless they are needed in court proceedings.

Alderman Shabazz expressed her concerns about the small percentage of funds that is given to African Americans in the City of Savannah. She stated there is a serious disparity that has been going on in the City of Savannah as the number of African Americans in the City is above the half way point.

Mayor DeLoach stated he doesn't believe it's about race, when someone gets the perception the game is rigged, it's difficult to change that perception. As a business owner it's difficult for a small business person of any race that is trying to move up the economic ladder.

City Manager Cutter stated the purpose of the disparity study is to identify the city's flaws and weaknesses. This report will guide the City on how to do better, whether it is a snap shot on policies or if it is to determine if staff is being accountable. Staff will work on areas where improvements are necessary and make the changes.

Alderman Johnson stated in terms of data, he believes it needs to be dually tracked. He also stated he is in favor of joint certification and joint compliance as it makes since to be able to widen the field and share the blame.

Mayor DeLoach thanked Mr. Strong and Dr. Price for their presentation.

Executive Session

Upon motion of Alderman Johnson, seconded by Alderman Durrence, and unanimously carried Council went into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing Litigation and Personnel.

Upon completion of this session, a motion was made to come out of Executive Session by Alderman Johnson, seconded by Alderman Miller, and unanimously carried.

City Manager Stephanie Cutter presented the City Manager's Briefing of the agenda items for the Council Meeting of March 15, 2016. The agenda is attached and made a part of the permanent record.

Mayor DeLoach adjourned this meeting.



Dyanne C. Reese, MMC,
Clerk of Council